

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

DATE: June 15, 2004

CALLED TO ORDER: 5:03 p.m.

ADJOURNED: 5:44 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Attending Members

Jackie Nytes, Chairwoman
Vernon Brown
Rebecca Langsford
Lynn McWhirter
Lincoln Plowman
Joanne Sanders
Steve Talley

Absent Members

AGENDA

PROPOSAL NO. 294, 2004 – reduces the appropriations for the City-County Council in the amount of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) for purpose of increasing the fund balance of the Consolidated County Fund

“Do Pass”

Vote: 7-0

PROPOSAL NO. 295, 2004 – reduces \$300,000 in appropriations for the Marion County Recorder for purposes of increasing the fund balance of the County General Fund

“Do Pass”

Vote: 7-0

PROPOSAL NO. 296, 2004 – reduces the appropriations for the Marion County Voters Registration Board in the amount of \$50,000 for purposes of increasing the fund balance of the County General Fund

“Do Pass”

Vote: 7-0

PROPOSAL NO. 297, 2004 – reduces the appropriations for the Marion County Assessor and Township Assessors in the amount of \$200,000 for the purposes of increasing the fund balance of the County General Fund

“Do Pass As Amended”

Vote: 7-0

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Administration and Finance Committee of the City-County Council met on Tuesday, June 15, 2004. Chairwoman Jackie Nytes called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m., with the following members present: Vernon Brown, Rebecca Langsford, Lynn McWhirter, Lincoln Plowman, Joanne Sanders and Steve Talley.

PROPOSAL NO. 294, 2004 – reduces the appropriations for the City-County Council in the amount of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) for purpose of increasing the fund balance of the Consolidated County Fund

Councillor Sanders said the breakdown of the reduction of \$50,000 out of the City-County Council budget comes from Character 03 in the 2004 budget as follows: Line Item 30301, \$22,500 in **Management Consulting** from the democrat caucus and \$22,500 in **Management Consulting** from the republican caucus; Line Item 34103, **Print Advertisement** reduction by \$1,000; and Line Item 34702, **Promotion Account** reductions by \$4,000. These cuts total \$50,000, that will go into the Consolidated County Fund in an effort to start showing dollars for the 2005 budget hearings.

Councillor McWhirter asked how many employees are in the Council office. Councillor Sanders said she believes there are seven employees. Councillor McWhirter said she was under the impression there were 13 employees and also wanted to know how that number compares to last year. Kent Burrow, Chief Financial Officer, said he believes there are seven employees, but will verify with the Council Clerk. There are three employees under contract with the Council; Kent Burrow, Melissa Conrad, and Aaron Haith. Councillor McWhirter asked how this compares to last year. Mr. Burrow said there was a General Counsel to the Council that Aaron Haith replaced, a Chief Financial Officer that Kent Burrow replaced, and Melissa Conrad is an additional person under contract. He said that he does not have the list of previous employees. There is one employee that still shows up as an employee of the Council that is on medical leave that he did not include with the full-time employee count. Councillor McWhirter asked how much Melissa Conrad's contract is. Mr. Burrow said he would get that information to Councillor McWhirter. Councillor Sanders said the count of employees this year and last year is even.

Councillor Sanders moved, seconded by Councillor Talley, to send Proposal No. 294, 2004 to the full Council with a "Do Pass" recommendation. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

PROPOSAL NO. 295, 2004 – reduces \$300,000 in appropriations for the Marion County Recorder for purposes of increasing the fund balance of the County General Fund

Councillor Sanders said the County Recorder has a Perpetuation Fund that the Council does not have authority to appropriate based on I. C. #38-2-7-10, but can reduce the County General Fund budget. The Council told Wanda Martin, Marion County Recorder, she would have flexibility within her own Perpetuation Fund.

Councillor McWhirter asked if Ms. Martin is comfortable with the reduction and feels she can still run the Recorder's Office in the proper manner. Ms. Martin replied in the affirmative and

said after reviewing her 2004 budget she had talked to the Auditor's office about giving \$300,000 back, therefore she is comfortable with the reduction.

Councillor Talley and Councillor Brown thanked Ms. Martin for being so cooperative in the process.

Councillor Sanders moved, seconded by Councillor Brown, to send Proposal No. 295, 2004 to the full Council with a "Do Pass" recommendation. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

PROPOSAL NO. 296, 2004 – reduces the appropriations for the Marion County Voters Registration Board in the amount of \$50,000 for purposes of increasing the fund balance of the County General Fund

Councillor Sanders said during the analysis of the Voter Registration 2004 budget, they identified the possibility of approximately \$100,000 in excess, which would be returned to the County General Fund in Character 01. In addition, they identified areas in Character 03 and 04 they found that would exceed their current budget in the amount of approximately \$57,000. It was determined that the Council would reduce their Character 01 budget by \$50,000 and that amount would go to the County General Fund.

Councillor McWhirter asked if they are comfortable with the reductions and could they explain what the Voters Registration Office might have to do without due to the reductions. Sherry Beck, Republican Board Member, stated that they can live with the reductions and said they did need an increase in Character 03 for the printing of poll books and Character 04 for the hardware and software in the office. Ms. Beck said even with the increase they will be able to run the office properly and are happy to give the money back to the County General Fund. Cathline Mullin, Democratic Board Member, said it helps because next year is an off year. Ms. Beck agreed but also stated that next year the office is changing to a State-wide voter registration system and all the equipment will need to be replaced.

Chairwoman Nytes asked if the Voters Registration will need to come back to the committee to ask for a transfer among characters. Ms. Beck replied in the affirmative. Chairwoman Nytes said that the Council is on notice that they have already identified this will happen.

Councillor Brown asked if a significant amount of reduction from their 2005 budget is expected, due to the off year. Ms. Beck said it is an off election year but they are going to a State-wide voter registration system. The equipment they use in their office now is leased and that lease ends December 31, 2005. The new system has to be up and running by January 1, 2006, therefore all new equipment will need to be purchased. The software will come from the State, but the hardware will have to be purchased by the office. There will be a reduction next year, but not an enormous amount.

Councillor Sanders asked if they anticipate a transition period between computer systems. Ms. Beck said they have no idea when the new system will transpire but will keep the Council informed, Councillor Sanders asked if the software is standardized for Indiana. Ms. Beck replied in the affirmative.

Chairwoman Nytes asked them to come back later this summer when they have more detail on the transition. Ms. Beck and Ms. Mullin agreed.

Councillor Sanders moved, seconded by Councillor Talley, to send Proposal No. 296, 2004 to the full Council with a "Do Pass" recommendation. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

PROPOSAL NO. 297, 2004 – reduces the appropriations for the Marion County Assessor and Township Assessors in the amount of \$200,000 for the purposes of increasing the fund balance of the County General Fund

Councillor Sanders introduced an amendment to Proposal No. 297, 2004 (Exhibit A) and said the Assessors came together and identified specific areas and an additional \$1,000 for a total of \$201,000. She read through Exhibit A and thanked the Assessors for coming together to identify these figures for the Council. Councillor Sanders moved to amend Proposal No. 297, 2004, seconded by Councillor Talley.

Paul Ricketts, Lawrence Township Assessor, said there is a correction with the amended proposal under Franklin Township Assessor. It should be Character 03 instead of Character 01. Councillor Sanders moved to amend the amendment, seconded by Councillor Talley.

Joan Romeril, Marion County Assessor, asked if the reductions made are only for the 2004 budget and will be back in for the 2005 budget. Councillor Sanders said at this stage they are only dealing with the 2004 budget and everything is still on the table for the 2005 budget. Ms. Romeril said that she is not finished with her reassessments and has been giving back to the General Fund while she was waiting to get started on her reassessments. She is now in the position where she may need those funds. Chairwoman Nytes said perhaps by the time Ms. Romeril reaches her crisis, the Township Assessors will be fine and possibly could come together again and help each other out. She said the Council has not issued any expectations for the 2005 budget.

Mr. Ricketts said they appreciate the opportunity to participate in the budget review. The Township Assessors identified money last year and this year. The Assessors are at a crossroad too, as they implement yearly updates for 2005-06. They have no idea if they will need additional staff and would like to re-visit this issue for the 2005 budget .

Councillor Brown asked if the Assessors hire their own staff. Mr. Ricketts said there is a County office that accepts applications and the Assessors review those applications and hire their own staff.

Concillor Sanders moved, seconded by Councillor Talley, to send Proposal No. 297, 2004 to the full Council with a "Do Pass As Amended" recommendation. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

[Clerk's Note: Councillor Plowman left at 5:33 p.m.]

Briefing on the Marion County Property Tax System Search

Mr. Ricketts said in order to have a decent property system the County needs a good foundation. The State is looking at a State-wide system and the County needs to put a system together quickly. Mr. Ricketts explained the power point presentation (Exhibit B). The major topics discussed were as follows: identified different offices that will be affected, the possibility of having the police and fire department having access to the property system, identified different areas that will need to be implemented in certain offices and a possible timeline (not included in all packets).

Councillor McWhirter said that in the Trustee's Office they have to verify that the person they are paying rent to is the actual owner of the property. She suggested it may be helpful if the Trustee's Office has access to the property system to speed up the process, instead of having to call the Assessor's Office. Mr. Ricketts said that the goal is to get better insight on how the system can work effectively.

Councillor Talley asked what the acronym for CAMA stands for. Mr. Ricketts said it stands for Computer System Massive Appraisal system. He said this is the acutal calculator where the Assessors enter their data.

Chairwoman Nytes asked how the Information Technology (IT) Department fits into this effort. Mr. Ricketts said they will support their system and hopefully, they will have their own maintenance agreement.

Chairwoman Nytes said she looks forward to having Mr. Ricketts come back to the committee with more detail as it develops

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CONCLUSION

With no further business pending, and upon motion duly made, the Administration and Finance Committee of the City-County Council was adjourned at 5:44.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jackie Nytes, Chairwoman
Administration and Finance Committee

JN/as